

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 28, 2021

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Chair
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Kennedy
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Feinstein, Ranking Member Kennedy, Chairwoman Kaptur and Ranking Member Simpson,

We are writing to thank you for your support for the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) and to request continued investment in the program in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022. Investments from the NBRC have significantly improved the infrastructure and quality of life in rural parts of our states, spurring job creation, economic growth and community development. Given its demonstrated record of success, we encourage you to include \$35 million for the NBRC in the FY 2022 Energy and Water (E&W) Development appropriations bill, with an allocation of \$4 million to address the decline in forest-based economies throughout the region and \$1.25 million for the State Capacity Building Grant Program. This continued investment would greatly benefit economic development in the Northern Forest region.

Established in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-234), the NBRC is a federal-state partnership that provides infrastructure and economic development assistance to 60 rural counties in New Hampshire, Vermont, New York and Maine. Since its creation, the NBRC partnership has invested more than \$72 million in 287 projects that have helped to create jobs, reduce poverty and unemployment and limit outmigration in Northern Forest communities. These investments have leveraged more than \$281 million in other public and private funds. In the last year alone, the Commission supported 51 projects, including efforts to provide education and workforce training, promote tourism and modernize critical infrastructure in the region. In addition, the NBRC provides assistance to states in creating comprehensive economic development plans that incorporate the resources and input of local governments and the general public to identify high-need project areas.

As you know, the Commission has repeatedly received overwhelming bipartisan support in Congress through robust appropriations and reauthorization of the program. Through the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-334), Congress extended the authorization of the NBRC for an additional five years, increased the appropriations authorization for the program, expanded its reach to additional counties throughout the region and established the State Capacity Building Grant Program, a new program to help develop projects that support business retention and expansion, access to high-speed broadband, critical infrastructure development and job creation throughout the region. Moreover, in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116-260), Congress included \$30 million for the NBRC which will help advance more projects and create jobs as America continues to climb out of the COVID-19 economic downturn.

While the Commission has made great progress promoting economic development and job growth in our communities, continued federal investment in the NBRC is critical to sustaining its efforts. Many Northern Forest communities still experience economic distress and as communities learn of the work that is being accomplished by the Commission, competition for the funding continues to grow. In 2020, the Commission received far more requests for funding than they were able to accommodate with the current appropriation. The NBRC is a strategic use of taxpayer dollars and leverages significant private capital for projects in our states. It is clear that we need to be encouraging economic and community development, and we commend the work of the subcommittees for previous support to this vital program.

We appreciate your consideration of this important request and look forward to working together on this important program.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



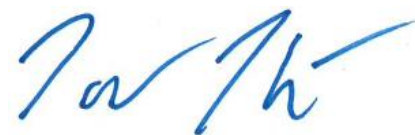
Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Paul Tonko
Member of Congress



Antonio Delgado
Member of Congress



John Katko
Member of Congress



Jared Golden
Member of Congress



Claudia Tenney
Member of Congress

